

FUNDACIÓN CIAT **(FUNDACIAT; CIAT FOUNDATION)**

Promoting Agricultural Innovation and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Introduction

The CIAT Management Team proposed the creation of an independent, not-for-profit entity that would contribute more effectively and efficiently to CIAT's mission in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). It would also address the many developmental needs in LAC that are not necessarily directly linked to CIAT's strategic research agenda. Named as *Fundación CIAT*, with the acronym FUNDACIAT, the entity would be organized as a foundation under Colombian law. Its purpose would be to promote initiatives, training, and capacity-building and development programs on issues that, in character, are scientific, technological, and natural-resources related. It will work in areas that complement CIAT's international agricultural research, particularly those linking research with development impact.

Justification

In LAC, more than 53 million people—that is, 10% of the region's population—suffer from malnutrition or hunger. Yet, paradoxically, the region is the planet's biggest exporter of food. This demonstrates that the main cause of malnutrition in LAC is not a lack of food-production capacity, but increased unemployment, lower incomes, and high food prices.

Most of the poor and hungry in LAC are small farmers, representing a large portion of the most vulnerable sectors of society. They need more and better development, and economic and policy tools to boost their agricultural production and productivity. Over the last 15 years, the economic, social, and political situation in LAC has, to all intents and purposes, erased advances made in the region's struggle against hunger.

Facing the upcoming challenges means increasing support for small farmers and strengthening cooperation and joint efforts. In this regard, although essential science, crop improvement, and soil fertility management continue to be significant for enhancing food security and raising agricultural incomes, they are no longer enough. To address the new challenges more effectively, research, development, and innovation (RD&I) must truly come together.

CIAT and its research partners have an impressive record of impact through crop biofortification, genetic resources management, enhancement of nutritional quality, adaptation to climate change and soil fertility, and pest-and-disease resistance. However, in LAC, more effective research delivery systems are needed to enable small farmers to better access research results, technology transfers, and innovative processes.

CIAT's new *Strategic Directions* aim to strengthen its work in LAC. This renewed commitment to its home region is not only necessary, but is also relevant for mitigating hunger and poverty in the area. The Center has already structured a research agenda that responds to regional priorities and focuses on interregional transfer of results.

In this context, the creation of FUNDACIAT is both timely and appropriate. The Foundation will contribute to greater impact on agricultural development issues in LAC by supporting

complementary, nontraditional activities related to research, development, and innovation at CIAT.

Contributing to CIAT's mission

FUNDACIAT's activities will greatly contribute to CIAT's mission by:

1. *Promoting the transfer of technology and knowledge from researchers to extension services and end-users.* FUNDACIAT will help develop more effective research delivery systems in LAC.
2. *Strengthening relationships with Colombia and LAC.* FUNDACIAT will make every effort to work hand-in-hand with Colombian national authorities and research centers on agricultural issues. As host country, Colombia is expected to play a major role. However, FUNDACIAT will be open to all LAC organizations and will reinforce partnerships in the region to improve response to needs and demands of the countries in this area.
3. *Forging new relationships with the private sector in areas that are of common interest to all parties.* FUNDACIAT will establish necessary links between the needs of small farmers and the interests of the private sector, always focusing on marginal areas that, although not of high priority for the private sector, nevertheless need its support for successful outcomes.
4. *Intensifying the establishment of private–public partnerships.* FUNDACIAT will seek opportunities to work with a wide array of partners (especially those located in its home region) to better address shared agricultural development concerns through collaborative activities.
5. *Extending CIAT's actions to nontraditional sectors.* FUNDACIAT will support the development of solutions related to agricultural issues that are not necessarily directly linked to CIAT's and CGIAR's research scope.
6. *Facilitating access to nontraditional partnerships and funding sources.* According to Colombian law, FUNDACIAT may conduct, without restriction, all sorts of fund-raising activities for research, development, infrastructure, and services projects. The Foundation may also hire experts (including CIAT staff) and organize teams to bid for projects, consultancies, and the like. This strategy brings not only additional funding, but also allows CIAT to deliver research findings through development projects.
7. *Reinforcing CIAT's long-term financial sustainability.* All balances generated by FUNDACIAT will be allocated annually to activities focused on accomplishing CIAT's mission. Additionally, FUNDACIAT may issue "certificates of donation" for tax purposes (e.g., discounts and benefits for donors). Colombian tax laws allow donors to deduct donations from their income tax returns.

Institutional structure and management

- FUNDACIAT will be formalized as a Colombian NGO. It will be a totally new legal structure organized as a foundation under Colombian law. Before the Foundation was registered, the statutes were reviewed by the local Chamber of Commerce.
- Initial support from CIAT will be minimal: as founder, CIAT must pay the registration fees. Once the Foundation is set up, CIAT will be responsible for paying the Executive Director's first year of salary.

- The Foundation will be a member of the Agronatura Science Park, which already exists at CIAT. As such, once FUNDACIAT becomes self-sufficient, it will pay all service charges (at full cost), as according to CIAT's policies.
- Diplomatic privileges and immunities granted to CIAT by the Colombian Government through Law 29/1988 are not transferable. Hence, CIAT will not extend its privileges to the Foundation.
- Surpluses resulting from projects implemented by FUNDACIAT shall be allocated annually (as according to Colombian law) to activities focused on CIAT's mission.
- FUNDACIAT will be governed by an Executive Council, comprising seven representatives. One from each of the following groups shall be chosen: agricultural universities, Colombian Government, Colombian private sector, regional private sector, one regional foundation, civil society, and CIAT.
- FUNDACIAT shall be managed by a full-time Executive Director, nominated by the Executive Council. The Director will also act as the Foundation's legal representative.
- The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Executive Council.